DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 162 787 RC 010 882

AUTHOR Luther, Joseph; Braglic, Vicki Ann
TITLE The Partnership for Rural Improvement: Linking Knowledge and Action.
PUB DATE Sep 78
NOTE 32p.; Paper presented at the American Institute of Planners National Conference (New Orleans, Louisiana, September, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Action Programs (Community); Community Involvement; *Community Planning; *Information Utilization; Institutional Role; Models; Planning Commissions; Rural Areas; *Rural Development; *School Community Relationship; Theories
IDENTIFIERS *Partnership for Rural Improvement; *Planners

ABSTRACT

The major goals of the Partnership for Rural Improvement (PRI) are to explore models for rural development and planning and to engage institutions of higher learning in progressively greater collaboration in delivering services to rural areas. Knowledge of rural planning in a PRI area exists at three scales: planner-educator-facilitators, local officials and staffs, and citizens. The planner-educators do not serve in a consulting role by doing the planning activities; they work with local officials so that knowledge is shared. The citizens are the critical aspect in achieving a socially viable plan, and planner-educators seek to engage them in group process in which perspectives may be shared, conflict resolved, and development goals realized. The task is one of planning with the community, not for it. Utilizing one PRI model, a rural county is being assisted in growth impact assessment and management. Basic strategy has included community contact, awareness and trust building efforts, development of educational and management materials, and formation of a task force of local staff and citizens. The theoretical evolution of the new role of the professional planner is traced along with practical applications in terms of skill training and curriculum recommendation. (Author/DS)

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THE PARTNERSHIP FOR RURAL IMPROVEMENT: LINKING KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

by

Joseph Luther and Vicki Ann Braglio

Eastern Washington University
Cheney, Washington

A Paper Presented at the
American Institute of Planners
National Conference
September, 1978
New Orleans, Louisiana

RC 010882

INTRODUCTION

In 1976, the W. K. Kellogg foundation funded a four year research project, The Partnership for Rural Improvement (PRI). The broad goals of this project are to 1) explore models for rural development and planning and 2) engage institutions of higher learning in a progressively greater collaboration in delivering services to rural areas. The PRI region covers eleven counties in Eastern Washington: the Partners represent Washington State University, Eastern Washington University, Cooperative Extension Service, Washington State Community College District 17 and Educational Service District 101. The PRI staff is involved in a variety of rural community development and planning activities. The authors, working together as a planner and a community development specialist, trained in group facilitation, discovered many areas of mutual learning. This paper presents the theoretical evolution of new role for the professional planner and its practical application in terms of skill-training and curriculum recommendation.

THE RURAL SITUATION

A typical county in the PRI service region is a rural, isolated area continguous to the Canadian border. 75% of its lands belong to the federal government and an Indian tribe and 25% is owned by private individuals. The only industries in the county, which has a severe winter season, are logging and mining. Some recreational development is now emerging as more people discover the scenic

amenities of the area's forests, lakes and mountains. The population is small and of a low density clustered in several small communities. For twenty years, the population steadily declined. Since 1970, however, the area has seen an in-migration of urban expatriates, alternative life-style seekers and retired persons. There is increasing differentiation among the population and growing conflict between old and new residents.

The local government is represented by three county commissioners and a city council composed of five members: a real estate dealer, a businessman, a rancher, a housewife and a school teacher. There is a county planning commission that meets less than once per month. Each member serves a six year term with staggered appointments. The county has no comprehensive plans, but zoning ordinances and building codes are regulated by a half-time CETA employee who serves as the planning staff.

There is considerable resistance to planning, most noticeably from elements of citizen groups such as the John Birch Society, the Taxpayers Association and the Committee to Restore the Constitution. This political conservatism and resistance to any control other than that at the local level is also manifested in a "frontier ethic" that focuses on the individual's privilege to land ownership and land use rights. Because of the large percentage of newcomers in the county, there are frequent value conflicts over public issues such as school programs, land use planning, and environmental concerns. The new population seems to make demands on the local government system and its officials that are threatening to the status quo.

A proposed industrial development and increasing recreational use have made the county commissioners and some city council

members more aware of the postential impacts of rapidly increasing population on schools, roads, water sewage and other government services.

THE EMERGING PROBLEM

As the socio-cultural values and characteristics of these rural counties change, the skills required to deal with such changes become more complex. In terms of planning, changes in rural counties usually center on land development and service delivery. The consequences of unanticipated and unmanaged growth present critical problems in the rural environs where financial resources are scarce and technical capacities are limited.

In many cases, the county is thrust into an administrative role far beyond its resources or capabilities. Here, the county in rural Washington may be confronted by a major preliminary plat application submitted by an experienced land development corporation with extensive resources. The proposal may entail single family homes, mobile homes, or condominium units and commercial development. The developer may prepare a site plan and plat that is minimal but none-the-less more sophisticated and professional appearing than usually experienced by the county staff and officials.

The State of Washington will require this county to provide a comprehensive site plan review of the preliminary plat application. Also, the provisions of the State Environmental Policy Act could apply here, and the county could be required to provide and/or review a complex environmental impact statement. These are just some of the many statutory tasks which the State may require of a county. The county, although required to comply, is not usually given any financial or technical assistance by the State with which to perform these tasks.

Because of the changing characteristics of the rural population, the in-migrating citizens may have rather sophisticated skills in reviewing matters of environmental or physical design aspects. Often the newer members of the rural communities have worked or have been educated in areas of expertise with which they can make significant comment on development proposals. The limited technical resource of the local government are often overwhelmed by the more advanced capabilities of concerned citizens committees and the developers.

The emerging problem is multi-faceted. On one hand, the rural county is facing a complex growth management situation where rapid change potential must be analyzed in terms of socio-cultural, economic and environmental cost and where sophisticated management techniques must be developed and applied to adequately deal with growth. On the other hand, the citizens and developers are asking for effective management and demanding responsive governmental services while representing a full spectrum of ideologies and self interest. The county, faced with demands on all fronts and an increasing rate of change, finds it does not have the resources, capabilities, or means of visualizing the scope of the situation, much less dealing with the changes to the satisfaction of all interested parties.

Even if the county had an adequate planning staff— a rare situation— the critical nature of the problem would remain. That is, how to deal with change in a manner that is at once technically appropriate and socially acceptable. On one hand, the planner must ensure a technically adequate product. On the other, the planner must strive to attain public support of a restrictive planning process and its technical product— managed growth.

This problem appears to be a function of the traditional planning approach, the scientific, rationalistic, centralized, decision-making, problem-solving model which planners have followed for decades. It is this rationalistic school of planning which has brought us to this point and is now failing. As Bolan noted in 1967, it is "...an unattainable ideal."

THE RATIONALISTIC-COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

The traditional response to the problems of the small rural community would be to invoke the rationalistic-comprehensive planning process. This well-known procedure involves the planning commission in the establishment of community goals and objectives; an inventory of resources, opportunities, constraints and capabilities; the formulation of alternative and the testing/selection of the optimal alternative. This is the planning process which has accompanied the profession since its rebirth in the City Beautiful era.

It was in that industrial/commercial era of the late 1800's when the rationalistic-comprehensive school of planning took seed in the enthusiasm generated by Frederick Winslow Taylor's scientific management techniques. It was the time of the City Beautiful and the City Efficient. Planners need to remember the city planning emerged in response to the business community's request for more efficient commercial development and investment protection.

The centralized, scientific management approach derived "... a world in which growth was set equal to development, the ends were clear, and the environment was controlled" (Friedman, 1973). The techniques initiated by Taylor employed a rationality that focused on the fitness and efficiency of means. Its function

was the least-cost attainment of production goals. Friedmann identifies this as authoritative and directive planning, while noting that "...some called it human engineering." Here, the individual person is treated as an instrument for the attainment of an extrinsic goal.

As this rationalistic-comprehensive theory predominated in planning schools, the role of the planner was shaped accordingly. The planner was prepared to be an expert, a bureaucrative regulator trained to analyze the existing situation and project the probable consequences. The planner became an expert in centralized strategy and decision-making.

In order to be publicly palatable, the planning process had to be reasonably credible. The planner, as expert, had to be especially credible. For many years, the professional planner fought to achieve such credibility through the employment of devices such as ritualistic incantations of scientific jargon, reinforced by multicolored maps of intrinsic suitability. When the planning expert came into intense conflict with the development expert and the citizen expert, obfuscation failed. The planning process often reverted to the application of concepts not far removed from the Skinnerian technique of negative reinforcement. The developers and citizens were forced to comply with the comprehensive plan and regulations or face punishment. The consequence was the establishment of hardened, cynical camps of experts, each with their limited perspectives, and none sharing knowledge. The planner became a foe of proponent and opponent and shrank further behind the curtain of professional mystique.

With the rise of social legislation in the 60's and environmental legislation in the 70's, the planner was forced into a structured citizen participation process. The planner was required to actively solicit public comment, to seek out other perspectives, to share knowledge and to clearly and concisely assist the citizens in the development of their plans, policies, programs and proposals. The planner had to develop a new role in addition to that of a subject matter expert. In addition to product, the planner had to be skilled in process.

Planning schools generally gave token recognition to the need for citizen participation through the use of courses in verbal, written and graphic communication skills. Somehow, by communicating more effectively, the planner was to motivate citizens to contribute to the planning process. Generally, it would seem that this approach only led to a more entertaining appearance by the planner and greater alienation of the citizen client.

The issue was, and is, how to involve rural citizens in the process of planning for their county, in preparing their plan, in managing the growth and development of the environment. This is one issue which the Partnership for Rural Improvement is attempting to address.

For over a decade, planning theories have vacillated between an emphasis on the planning product and the planning process (Hightower, 1969). Since 1970, the emphasis seems to be shifting towards a focus on the planning process and an awareness of planning as social process (Bolan, 1971). John Friedman, borrowing a famous line from Sarte, noted in 1973 that planning is dead. That is, our inherited notions of planning are dead. Friedman invited us to rethink planning from the start. He notes that any

fundamental change in society must be worked from below. It must originate with those who are without substantial power. The planning of the future, according to Friedmann, is a process of societal guidance which is too important to be left entirely to experts. "Transactive planning" would involve face-to-face, person-centered relations within small groups as a means of drawing increasing numbers of people into a direct engagement with their society. This is quite different from the current technique of citizen participation as practiced by planners. Friedman is advocating that local citizens acquire a competence at the level of a study group, to assist in planning-related tasks set largely by the group itself but related to the larger situation of the county or region. The role of the rural planner is significantly modified in this transactive approach. (Friedman, 1973).

THE TRANSACTIVE-PROCESS APPROACH

Magoroh Maruyam (1973), writing on "Human Futuristics and Urban Planning," notes that culture changes do not just happen. He states that "...People make them happen. Therefore culture changes are subject to people's goals, imagination, will and choice." Maruyam goes on to establish that, in terms of human futuristics, cultural goals are not a priori given, they are generated by people. Goals are to be inductively built by the opinions of the people rather than considered an a priori given. While the rationalistic-comprehensive approach worked from a centralized goal downward, Maruyam's human futuristics operates upward from a grass-roots level.

There is a need for a decentralized or diverse goal system, as opposed to centralized system. The human futuristics of

Maruyam are concerned with heterogeneous goals. This calls for a dynamic evolving-goal system and eventually a goal-evolving system. The rationalistic approach deals with the optimal application of scientific knowledge when a goal is given. It should be remembered, however, that goals are generated by people. Therefore, rural planners should not attempt to generate goals, but rather should faciiitate citizens in generating their own goals . The planner's function is catalytic.

Stephen Grabow and Allan Heskin (1973) have joined Maruyam in the suggestion of new roles for planners. Their article on "Foundations for a Radical Concept of Planning" presented a new planning theory-model to challenge the "rationalistic-comprehensive" model of modern planning. The Grabow-Heskin model is based on systems change and the realization of a decentralized communal society that facilitates human development in the context of an ecological ethic through evolutionary social experimentation. The role of the rural planner in this paradigm would be to facilitate change.

In their radical redefinition of planning, Grabow and Heskin identify the planner as an active, radical agent of change. The planner is "...not, as are so many of today's professionals, a creature of divided loyalty, one who owes as much or more to the profession as to the people. Instead, the job is to facilitate social experimentation by the people. The radical planner is a nonprofessional professional: no longer one with a property right entitled "planning," but rather an educator and at the same time a student of the ecological ethic as revealed in the consciousness of the people. Such an individual strives for self-actualization of one self and of the others with whom one

lives. Finally, he or she is not apart from the people: the "planner" is one of us or all of us."

This role for rural planners, while a radical departure from the rationalistic theory model, is well-sustained in the literature of the profession and forms the basis of one of the more clearly defined theories of planning. This point is best brought out in an article by John Friedmann and Barclay Hudson entitled "Knowledge and Action: A Guide to Planning Theory" (1974). Their article was an attempt to outline planning theory as a distinctive field of study. Friedmann and Hudson devised a definition of planning which was sufficiently broad to encompass the entire spectrum of planning theories. They derived the following: "Planning is an activity centrally concerned with the linkage between knowledge and organized action. As a professional activity and as a social process, planning is therefore located precisely at the interface bwtween knowledge and action."

Friedmann and Hudson identified four major traditions of planning theory: philosophical synthesis, rationalism, organization development, and empiricism. Of these, only the theories of philosophical synthesis and organizational development would seem congruent with the emerging response in planning practice, while empiricism and rationalism would seem to represent the traditional response.

The theoretical tradition of philosophical synthesis began with the writings of Karl Mannheim (1935). The problem of planning, according to Mannheim, revolved around the possibility of comprehensive social knowledge. Planning was viewed as a way of thinking: social consciousness. The principium medium discovered by Mannheim was education.

Later, the concepts of rational calculation and control in social processes were the themes of Robert Dahl and Charles Lindblom (1953) who provided an authorative analysis of the ways in which we arrive at choices and carry those choices into action.

Following this, Amitai Etzioni (1968)(1969) dealt with planning as part of a larger process of societal guidance. As with Simon (1947), Etzioni defined planning as rational decision-making. However, not unlike Mannheim, Etzioni sought to link knowledge and action as components in the context of a social system. Etzioni saw the source of social crisis as being social alienation—the lack of individual commitment to social purposes. His solution for this problem was social mobilization or formation of a group, concensus around important social tasks.

By the early 70's, a new planning paradigm had emerged which emphasized man's psycho-social development as a central issue of planning. Planning was seen as a form of social learning. This era began with Charles Hampden-Turner's Radical Man (1970) and moved through Edgar Dunn's Economic and Social Development (1971) and Donald Schon's Beyond the Stable State (1971). This was followed by John Friedmann's Retracking America: A Theory of Transactive Planning (1973. The societal learning process was reemphasized in Donald Michael's (1973) book on Learning to Plan and Planning to Learn in which he notes that long range social planning should be a learning process rather than a social engineering technology.

These authors rejected the traditional planning theory. They presented planning as a form of social learning that occurred in loosely linked network structures consisting of small, temporary,

nonhierarchical, and task-oriented working groups. Friedmann especially emphasized interpersonal transactions as the basic means of exchange between technical experts and clients. A process of mutual learning was advocated in which limited perspectives could be overcome, and specialized knowledge could be shared. The goal of this transactive planning is the innovative adaptation of social organizations to a constantly shifting environment. As Friedmann and Hudson (1974) point out, the ultimate purpose was to support and enhance man's own development as a person in the course of transforming action itself.

Friedmann's book stands at the top of this philosophical track of planning theory which began with Mannehim in 1935. Friedmann himself issues the challenge for further work dealing with the ways "...in which a decomposing industrial society might change itself into a self organizing, negentropic learning system."

The other major emerging planning theory tradition is that of organizational development. This theory focuses on the means to achieve desired changes in organizational structure and behavior. The emphasis in planned organizational change, notes Friedmann and Hudson, implies a preoccupation with innovation, the role of "change agents" and the web of interpersonal relationships of which organizations are constructed. Although the tradition of organization development contradicted the working hypothesis of the rationalistic theory, it did begin to merge with the theories of the philosophical synthesis tradition. Here, planning could not be meaningfully separated from implementing action, and the planner's role came to be defined as that

of change agent (Jones 1969; Schein, 1969). The concepts of organizational development are now beginning to be incorporated with the main body of planning theory, while the basic intervention and group process skills of organizational development seem to be more and more applicable to the professional planner (Beneviste, 1972) (Michael, 1973).

THE POTENTIAL OF GROUP PROCESS SKILLS

The study of group processes is a loosely organized interdisciplinary field that is usually considered among the social sciences. Sociology, organizational and developmental psychology, and anthropology are disciplines from which the field of group processes has evolved. It represents a study of behaviors and technology that is in a dynamic stage and one that is not easily defined. The bodies of knowledge existing now continue to grow from areas of the applied social and behavioral sciences. In the last twenty-five years, the need has increased for an understanding of how groups behave and work together, as well as individuals with specific skills and attitudes that can facilitate a group's task.

Although the field itself represents a number of applied and theoretical disciplines, a foundation for the study of group process, was laid in 1948 by Kurt Lewin's work on group dynamics. Lewin's conceptual work, applied to the behavior of small groups, set the stage for general theoretical stance that groups have an identity of their own relative to, but not identical to, a composite of the individuals in the group. The concept of group development (the emergence of patterns of behavior in small groups working on a task together) was extensively analyzed by Bales in 1950 in another study that led the way for exploration

in group development and problem-solving.

Perhaps one of the most important foundations for the study of group process, as well as a continuing major influence, was the early work of the National Training Laboratories in group dynamics, communications theory and practice. The developments that came from the NTL research in the fifties and sixties included an expanded theory of experiential learning (and a technology for observation and intervention in group processes). The work done by Bradford, Lippitt and Benne in learning theory was based on their discovery that while individuals occasionally learn from experience, learning is much more predictable when experience is combined with structured feedback. This "do, look, learn" model resulted in the development of a technology of observation and intervention to support the role of group process facilitator. This role developed from a need for a person who could keep the group aware of how it was accomplishing its task as well as attending to maintenance needs particular to a group, such as inclusion and balance of participation.

Havelock's work on planned change (Havelock, 1973) is also a significant contribution to the field. The Havelocks' research identifies four major roles for a change agent: catalyst, resource linker, solution giver, process helper. All of these roles are elements of standard community and organizational development strategies, but the latter particularly reflects the emphasis on group process skills as tools for professionals who work with groups— community-based or organization related. The community development specialist, much like an organizational consultant, intervenes in a system and analyses its structures and procedures. Working with a group of involved citizens or a selected number

of management staff demands many of the same skills in group processes.

With the increasing need for professionals to help groups function effectively, the role of group facilitator has become more common. The expertise involved in working with groups involves not only a specific set of skills but a system of underlying values related to human relations. A basic tenet of the facilitator is a belief in shared-decision-making and the value of individual input. People who are affected by decisions should have an opportunity to influence those decisions (Druian, 1976). Friedmann refers to this in a discussion of the public interest and citizen participation by stating: "A sharing in process implies having (or obtaining) equal access to the resources of the environment; a sharing in substance implies that such shares be dealt out fairly. Both are essential to the idea of the good society" (Friedmann, 1973).

The ethical implications of working with a group are varied: manipulative or coercive behavior on the part of a highly skilled facilitator would make it quite difficult for a group to function in a way satisfactory to its members. For reasons such as this, the professional ethic of a group facilitator demands that s/he maintain a healthy and honest awareness of herself/himself and model behaviors that are conducive to effective communication and teamwork.

The task of a facilitator is flexible: one definition can be the intervening in a group process in such a way that a group is helped to accomplsih its task in a climate that is comfortable and satisfying to its members. The methodology for such an intervention is based on the facilitator's diagnosis of the group and

its needs. The nature of how groups work and develop, then, is a basic area of expertise for the facilitator. Other areas of knowledge would include communications skills, problem-solving and conflict resolution. Each of these areas will be discussed at more length at a later point in this paper.

Gordon Lippit in his work (1973) Visualizing Change has identified a series of relative roles for client and consultant that can be adapted to examine the role of planner using facilitator skills. Although this list is not exhaustive, it can serve as a conceptual framework to look at practical application.

Advocate The planner-facilitator can always advocate the use of good process skills and shared decision-making.

Expert The planner-facilitator can provide expert technical assistance while still allowing members the responsibility for decisions. The planner-facilitator would serve in a staff function to the group.

Trainer The planner-facilitator should be capable of transferring knowledge and skills that would enable the group to effectively participate in the planning process. This might involve work with a citizen task force, commissioners or advocates for special interest groups.

Alternative Identifier The planner-facilitator should have the ability to formulate alternative proposals which are both technically feasible and viable in the context of community values. The planner-facilitator should be able to constructively involve citizens in the refinement and redefinition of alternatives.

Collaborator The planner-facilitator should join the problem-solving group as a participant rather than as a leader. Special knowledge should be shared through dialogue rather than diatribe.

The planner-facilitator plans with the group, not for it.

Process Helper The planner-facilitator can serve as process observor and intervene to help the group be aware of ways it can function more efficiently.

Resource Linker The planner-facilitator should be an information broker. Not only should the planner-facilitator serve as a link for the group to resources but may also serve a translator function between highly technical knowledge and group application.

Catalyst The planner-facilitator needs to import vision to a group in order to stimulate the members to action. As a catalyst to a group, the planner-facilitator can help a group realize the potential it represents in member's interests, skills and knowledge. The planner-facilitator should be able to identify such skills and knowledge in group members and suggest ways to apply them to the planning process.

As the Lippit framework indicates, there is a direct relationship in the role of the facilitator and the clients' participation. For the planner-facilitator, this represents a wide spectrum of citizen particpation and work with other groups. While these roles overlap, it is the planner-facilitator's ability to diagnose the needs of the group that determines the appropriate role and its relationship to client participation in a given task. The awareness of the flexibility of roles is an important aspect of the facilitative approach to working with groups and must be cultivated with processed skills. (See Table 1)

The blending of the philosophical synthesis theory and the organizational development theory is intended to produce a new style of planner— a new role in which the planner becomes a facilitator of mutual learning within the community context.

TABLE I.

Level of Participation: Client Participation / Facilitator Participation	Directive Facilitation					Non-directive Facilitation		
	1 Advocate	2 Expert	3 Trainer	4 Alternative Identifier	5 Collaborator	6 Process Helper	7 Resource Linker	8 Catalyst
	Persuades Client to Proper Approach	Gives Expert Advice to Client	Develops Training Experiences to Aid Client	Provides Alternative to Client	Joins in Problem Solving	Assists Client in Problem Solving Process	Serves to Help Client Collect Data	Serves as Catalytic Agent for Client in Solving the Problem

Client Participation

PRI: LINKING KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

The major goals of the Partnership for Rural Improvement are to explore models for rural development and planning and to engage institutions of higher learning in progressively greater collaboration in delivering services to rural areas. The PRI consortium of educational institutions, governmental agencies and citizens is located precisely at the interface of knowledge and action. Each of the "partners" in PRI represents specialized knowledge and unique perspectives. Action in the rural environs can only be implemented by the sharing of this knowledge through a process of mutual learning.

Knowledge of rural planning and development in this region exists at three scales. At the highest order is the planner-educator in residence at the institutions of higher education. Eastern Washington University's Center for Urban and Regional Planning offers graduate and undergraduate degrees in planning. Washington State University offers a graduate degree emphasizing rural and regional planning. The Cooperative Extension Service offers staff expertise in rural planning, sociology, economics, and growth management.

The introduction of process skills into this educational consortium has resulted in a mutual learning process among those planner-educators who are to provide knowledge in the rural environs. As a consequence, the planner-facilitator is emerging from this learning process.

These planners (educators-facilitators) are, in turn, working in the rural counties and communities to assist the local officials and staffs in dealing with the emerging problems of rural planning and development. These elected and appointed

officials, as well as staffs, share knowledge with the planner-educators from the educational institutions. This learning process is facilitated by the PRI Program Associates skilled in group process. Learning experiences occur in workshops, short-courses, and individualized discussion sessions. These are enhanced through the use of education materials such as handbooks, films and slides, and workbooks for study.

The planner-educators are not to serve a consulting role in the rural areas by doing the planning activities for the officials and staff. Rather, they are to work with the county commissioners, planning commissions, and planning staffs so that knowledge is shared. On one hand, the rural community receives knowledge from the educational institutions. On the other hand, the educational institutions gain insight and knowledge from the rural communities. The latter is carried back into the classroom on campus where it is shared with the emerging professional planners. Concurrently, these students from the educational institutions are provided rural experience via field projects and internships. These provide a service to rural areas lacking resources for extensive studies and enhances the mutual learning process.

The local planners and/or planner designees are also afforded the opportunity of acquiring group process skills. In this way, the mutual learning process may also be enhanced with local citizens, related professionals and representatives of agencies and interest groups.

At the third level of scale are these local citizens, professionals and representatives. They are the user-clients of the planning process and, as such, represent the critical aspect

of the dialogues of mutual learning. In order to achieve the socially viable plan and planning process, these people must share in the process so that they will perceive the plan as "their plan" and the process as involving them. It is a matter of accountability. The various perspectives and areas of expertise represented at the local level have often thwarted the planning process. The planner-facilitator in the rural areas seeks to engage these individuals in a group process in which perspectives may be shared, mutual learning may occur, conflict may be resolved, and congruence of rural planning and development goals, objectives and processes may be realized. The planner-facilitator is a contributor to these dialogues, providing the benefits of special knowledge while seeking knowledge from the group. In this way, the task becomes one of planning with the community not for it. The notion of planner-planee relations is dispelled and the ideology of community is enhanced. Planning becomes a social process as knowledge and action are linked among the three scales.

The Partnership for Rural Improvement is field testing several models for rural planning and development. In this case, the authors are working with a rural county, such as that previously described, to assist in growth impact assessment and management. This assignment began as a request to PRI from county officials for technical assistance from the educational institutions.

It is important to note that such a request indicates some degree of willingness to cooperate on the part of the local government, which eases the PRI intervention considerably.

The county, in requesting assistance, agreed to allocate a half-time staff member to work in cooperation with the PRI

staff in learning new knowledge and skills in both rural planning and community development. County commissioners, planning commission members and staff have also requested specialized workships in basic planning and growth management. In this way, the requisite tasks of rural growth management could be accomplished after the PRI team withdrew from the area.

In those situations where a staff member is not available, PRI would work with appointed citizens task forces to develop the needed knowledge and skills. These task forces would then provide the on-going, long-term growth management activities in the rural areas.

The basic strategy being employed in the rural county combines community contact, awareness and trust-building efforts by the community development specialist, the development of educational and management materials by the planner-educator, and a task force of local staff and citizens.

Since PRI is a collaborative effort, the planner-educators developing educational and management materials are drawn from Washington State University, Cooperative Extension Service, and Eastern Washington University. Their work centers, in this case, on the development of a growth assessment handbook which would provide county officials and staff with the means to anticipate the social, economic, and environmental costs and benefits of change. Following a simple format, the handbook will combine some basic general principles with practical worksheets and lists of informational resources, all arranged in topical sections.

The second phase of the strategy is to provide an orientation to the handbook. The target group for this learning experience will include appointed and elected officials as well as staff and influential community leaders including school board members, county agent, Rural Development Committee

members and representatives of agencies and interest groups The explicit goals of this training are to familiarize the participants with the handbook, present technical knowledge in an understandable manner, link the participants with appropriate resources, and help the participants to become more aware of the issues and problems of rural growth mangement.

Implicit goals include a sharing of knowledge regarding this county. This mutual learning will permit a "calibration" of the handbook and an awareness of the need for growth management as a fucntion of good community business practice. The latter will form the basis of a later process in which management techniques to deal with growth will be presented. The resistance to change of established socio-cultural activities and ideologies is thus overcome by sharing of knowledge and mutual recognition of need-linking knowledge and action.

The learning experience will also be an opportunity to involve the local planning staff as a co-facilitator and to model facilitator behaviors in a positive setting. This training also represents another concrete example of the PRI linking knowledge with action by developing skills at the local level.

After a negotiated time span, a follow-up session will be held to obtain additional information regarding the effectiveness of the handbook and to discuss the need for means of dealing with impacts made visible by the handbook.

The last phase of strategy is the withdrawal of the PRI staff, which will allow the local community increasing independence in their tasks. Technical assistance will remain available but staff will continue to encourage and support efforts by the local resources. All three scales will continue

to be involved in an interrelated linkage of knowledge and action providing more effective rural development and planning.

THE EMERGING PLANNER

The PRI model of the planner-facilitator implies a new role for planning education. Following the theoretical traditions outlined in this paper and based on the field experiences in rural environs, the PRI educational consortium is engaged in an effort to develop new planning education curriculums for training in these new areas of knowledge and skills.

These new curriculums will include the traditional planning practice competencies but will also include new competencies drawn from the field of organizational development and group process. Those aspects of organizational development and group process which are recommended for such training are represented in the following competencies.

PLANNER-FACILITATOR COMPETENCIES

Planner-facilitators need competencies in process skills (adapted from Druian et al, 1976):

1. Helping groups accomplish tasks. Planner-facilitators need to be able to assist groups to use problem-solving techniques and specialized research and development competencies such as accessing information, using official procedures, and analyzing opportunities and constraints.
2. Helping groups function productively. Planner-facilitators need to be able to assist a group to function productively by focusing the group's attention on the dynamics of its operation. Process facilitators also need to be able to help a group establish the norms of agreements by which it operates. Planner-facilitators need to be able to offer

technical assistance when appropriate.

3. Helping groups collaborate. Planner-facilitators need to be able to diagnose (a) communication networks in a community, (b) typical ways in which decisions are made, (c) group resources, and (d) ways in which resources are allocated. In addition, planner-facilitators should be able to help groups become aware of the need to collaborate with other groups and carry out and assess the effectiveness of the commitments that allow collaboration to take place.
4. Building productive relationships. Planner-facilitators need to know how to engage in relationships that are characterized by mutual respect. Planner-facilitators need to know how to (a) provide constructive feedback by using positive techniques of critiquing; (b) read basic nonverbal messages; (c) discover, recognize, and accept cultural norms different from their own; (d) engage in techniques of team building; and (e) be comfortable with a wide variety of people. In instances where work is being impeded by extraneous factors, planner facilitators need to be able to recognize and deal humanely with the situation.
5. Engaging in a program of continuous personal and professional development. Planner-facilitators need to be able to identify their own training needs, to understand themselves, to organize their work, and to tap the body of knowledge that makes up the profession of planning.

THE PROSPECT

This paper has presented an outline of the formation of a planning theory tradition dating from 1935. The Partnership for Rural Improvement is actively engaged in a process of applying

that theory in field practice in rural counties and communities of Washington State. Stemming from the application and field testing of this new, emerging approach to planning practice are several important implications for planning education. The model presented here provides an interactive model for mutual learning at three scales involving institutions of higher education, local officials and staff, and local citizens. Learning is shared in a social process among all three scales and flows from one to the other in a constant dialogue.

This model should serve to enhance the prospect of more effective rural planning and development as well as more viable and responsible community development.

Vicki Ann Braglio is Program Associate for the Eastern Sub-region of the Partnership for Rural Improvement. Based at Spokane Falls Community College, she coordinates PRI activites in six rural counties of Northeastern Washington.

Dr. Joseph Luther is Director of the Center for Urban and Regional Planning, Eastern Washington University. He is the PRI Program Coordinator at that institution.

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